



# Program Brief

## **“Challenges to U.S. Policy in the Middle East” “Iraq and the Middle East Peace Process”**

**Presentations by**

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Background information provided by the

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## U.S. GOVERNMENT RESOURCES

Topical pages from the website of the U.S. Embassy Vienna:

- [Middle East](http://www.usembassy.at/en/policy/middle_east.htm) ([http://www.usembassy.at/en/policy/middle\\_east.htm](http://www.usembassy.at/en/policy/middle_east.htm))
- [Iraq](http://www.usembassy.at/en/policy/iraq.htm) (<http://www.usembassy.at/en/policy/iraq.htm>)

Pages compiled by the Bureau of International Information Programs/U.S. Department of State:

- [The Middle East: A Vision for the Future](http://usinfo.state.gov/mena/middle_east_north_africa/me_vision.html) ([http://usinfo.state.gov/mena/middle\\_east\\_north\\_africa/me\\_vision.html](http://usinfo.state.gov/mena/middle_east_north_africa/me_vision.html))
- [Middle East & North Africa](http://usinfo.state.gov/mena/) (<http://usinfo.state.gov/mena/>)
- [The Roadmap to Middle East Peace](http://usinfo.state.gov/regional/nea/summit/roadmap.htm) (<http://usinfo.state.gov/regional/nea/summit/roadmap.htm>)
- [Middle East Partnership Initiative](http://usinfo.state.gov/mena/middle_east_north_africa/me_partnership_initiative.html) ([http://usinfo.state.gov/mena/middle\\_east\\_north\\_africa/me\\_partnership\\_initiative.html](http://usinfo.state.gov/mena/middle_east_north_africa/me_partnership_initiative.html))
- [Iraq Update](http://usinfo.state.gov/mena/middle_east_north_africa/iraq.html) ([http://usinfo.state.gov/mena/middle\\_east\\_north\\_africa/iraq.html](http://usinfo.state.gov/mena/middle_east_north_africa/iraq.html))
- [Iraq Elections: A Vote for Democracy](http://usinfo.state.gov/mena/middle_east_north_africa/iraq/Iraq_Elections_A_Vote_for_Democracy.html) ([http://usinfo.state.gov/mena/middle\\_east\\_north\\_africa/iraq/Iraq Elections A Vote for Democracy.html](http://usinfo.state.gov/mena/middle_east_north_africa/iraq/Iraq_Elections_A_Vote_for_Democracy.html))



U.S. Department of State

- [Bureau of Near Eastern Affairs](http://www.state.gov/p/nea/) (<http://www.state.gov/p/nea/>)
- [Middle East Peace](http://www.state.gov/p/nea/rt/c2829.htm) (<http://www.state.gov/p/nea/rt/c2829.htm>)
- [Middle East Partnership Initiative](http://mepi.state.gov/) (<http://mepi.state.gov/>)
- [Iraq](http://www.state.gov/p/nea/ci/c3212.htm) (<http://www.state.gov/p/nea/ci/c3212.htm>)

The White House

- [The Road Map to Peace](http://www.whitehouse.gov/infocus/mideast/index.html) (<http://www.whitehouse.gov/infocus/mideast/index.html>)
- [Renewal in Iraq](http://www.whitehouse.gov/infocus/iraq/) (<http://www.whitehouse.gov/infocus/iraq/>)



## STATEMENTS

- **President Bush's Radio Address**

Washington, D.C.

March 19, 2005

(<http://www.whitehouse.gov/news/releases/2005/03/20050319.html>)

Good morning. On this day two years ago, we launched Operation Iraqi Freedom to disarm a brutal regime, free its people, and defend the world from a grave danger.

Before coalition forces arrived, Iraq was ruled by a dictatorship that murdered its own citizens, threatened its neighbors, and defied the world. We knew of Saddam Hussein's record of aggression and support for terror. We knew of his long history of pursuing, even using, weapons of mass destruction, and we know that September the 11th requires our country to think differently. We must, and we will, confront threats to America before they fully materialize.

Now, because we acted, Iraq's government is no longer a threat to the world or its own people. Today the Iraqi people are taking charge of their own destiny. In January, over eight million Iraqis defied the car bombers and assassins to vote in free elections. This week, Iraq's Transitional National Assembly convened for the first time. These elected leaders broadly represent Iraq's people and include more than 85 women. They will now draft a new constitution for a free and democratic Iraq. In October, that document will be presented to the Iraqi people in a national referendum. Another election is planned for December to choose a permanent constitutional government.

Free governments reflect the culture of the citizens they serve, and that is happening in Iraq. Today, Iraqis can take pride in building a government that answers to its people and honors their country's unique heritage. Millions of Americans saw that pride in an Iraqi woman named Safia Taleb al-Suhail who sat in the gallery during the State of the Union address. Eleven years ago, Saddam Hussein's thugs murdered her father. Today, Safia's nation is free, and Saddam Hussein sits in a prison cell. Safia expressed the gratitude of the Iraqi nation when she embraced the mom of Marine Corps Sergeant Byron Norwood who was killed in the assault on Fallujah.

To all the brave members of our Armed Forces who have taken part in this historic mission, and to your families, I express the heartfelt thanks of the American people. I know that nothing can end the pain of the families who have lost loved ones in this struggle, but they can know that their sacrifice has added to America's security and the freedom of the world.

Iraq's progress toward political freedom has opened a new phase of our work there. We are focusing our efforts on training the Iraqi security forces. As they become more self-reliant and take on greater security responsibilities, America and its coalition partners will increasingly assume a supporting role.

In the end, Iraqis must be able to defend their own country, and we will help that proud, new nation secure its liberty. And then our troops will return home with the honor they have earned.

Today we're seeing hopeful signs across the broader Middle East. The victory of freedom in Iraq is strengthening a new ally in the war on terror, and inspiring democratic reformers from Beirut to Tehran. Today, women can vote in Afghanistan, Palestinians are breaking the old patterns of violence, and hundreds of thousands of Lebanese are rising up to demand their sovereignty and democratic rights. These are landmark events in the history of freedom. Only the fire of liberty can purge the ideologies of murder by offering hope to those who yearn to live free.

The experience of recent years has taught us an important lesson: The survival of liberty in our land increasingly depends on the success of liberty in other lands. Because of our actions, freedom is taking root in Iraq, and the American people are more secure. Thank you for listening.

- **President Bush and King Abdullah of Jordan Discuss Middle East Peace, Trade**

Washington, D.C.

March 15, 2005

(<http://www.whitehouse.gov/news/releases/2005/03/20050315.html>)

... We view Hezbollah as a terrorist organization, and I would hope that Hezbollah would prove that they're not by laying down arms and not threatening peace. One of our concerns The Majesty and I discussed is that Hezbollah may try to derail the peace process between Israel and the Palestinians. And it's very important that this peace process go forward, for the sake of the Palestinians, for the sake of the Israelis, and for the sake of all the people in the region. But Hezbollah has been declared a terrorist organization by the United States because of terrorist activities in the past.

... As for the Palestinian-Israeli issue, the role of the United States will be to continue to urge both parties to make the sacrifices necessary -- sacrifice meaning that Israel must withdraw from the settlements, there must be contiguous territory for a Palestinian state -- into which a Palestinian state can grow. The Palestinians, in their part, must continue to work hard to fight any terrorist activities within the territories, and the Arab world must continue to work together to help Palestine build the necessary structures for democracy.

... I believe President Abbas is desirous of developing a state that will live side by side with Israel in peace. And we recognize that the Palestinians need help in consolidating security forces and training security forces to defeat the terrorists who would like to stop the march of freedom. ...

- [U.S. Support for the EU-3](#)  
**Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice**  
Washington, D.C.  
March 11, 2005  
(<http://www.state.gov/secretary/rm/2005/43276.htm>)

The United States appreciates the efforts of the European Union 3 (EU-3) and the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) to deal with the Iranian nuclear issue. President Bush had very good discussions on Iran when he was in Europe which reflect a common view on the way forward.

The Europeans have been very clear with the Iranians that there will have to be certain objective guarantees that Iran is not trying to use a civilian nuclear program to provide cover for a weapons program.

In order to support the EU-3's diplomacy, the President has decided that the U.S. will drop its objection to Iran's application to the World Trade Organization and will consider, on a case by case basis, the licensing of spare-parts for Iranian civilian aircraft, in particular from the EU to Iran.

We share the desire of European Governments to secure Iran's adherence to its obligations through peaceful and diplomatic means. Today's announcement demonstrates that we are prepared to take practical steps to support European efforts to this end. The spotlight must remain on Iran, and on Iran's obligation to live up to its international commitments.

We also share with European Governments concerns about Iran's record on human rights and democracy and its support for terrorism. At this moment of historic opportunity, as the U.S. and our allies work together to support progress between the Israelis and the Palestinians, Iran must cease its support for those groups who use violence to oppose Middle East peace.

- [Remarks With Ukrainian Minister of Foreign Affairs Boris Tarasyuk After Meeting](#)  
**Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice**  
Washington, D.C.  
March 11, 2005  
(<http://www.state.gov/secretary/rm/2005/43328.htm>)

... QUESTION: Madame Secretary, if I might ask you to expand on your announcement about Iran and agreements with the European Union on incentives. Does this now mean that you are optimistic that Iran will abandon its uranium enrichment program and do you have a timetable for getting it to do so? How long are you going to give this new agreement?

Thank you.

SECRETARY RICE: Well, the key here was to establish with our European allies a common agenda, a common approach to the issue of getting the Iranians to live up to the international obligations which they have undertaken. And again, let's just be reminded that the Iranians have an obligation to demonstrate that they are not trying under cover of civilian nuclear power development to develop a nuclear weapon and there are grave concerns that they are trying to do that, suspicious activities that are being tracked by the IAEA, and so the European Union had undertaken these negotiations.

We have said for quite a long time now that we supported this diplomatic effort and that we wanted it to succeed and that Iran ought to take the opportunity given to it. What we have tried to do in removing our objections to WTO application from the Iranians and to the provision of certain spare parts to Iranian commercial aircraft is to now more actively support that diplomatic effort.

But I want to be very clear. This is support for the European Union's effort which we hope would succeed and which we very much want to succeed, and that that is the support. There is very often too much talk about what the United States needs to do or what the European Union needs to do. We can now return the focus to what the Iranians need to do. And the Iranians need to take the opportunity that the Europeans are presenting them with to demonstrate that they are prepared to live up to their international obligations. I certainly hope that this will succeed. We are trying to help to give it its best chance to succeed. But now Iran faces a choice and the world will know whether Iran intends to do that.

We do not have a specific timetable. Obviously, these are negotiations. We will stay in close contact with our friends. This has been going on for some time. And I would think that if the Iranians are going to demonstrate that they are prepared to live up to their obligations that they would want to do that sooner rather than later. ...

- **President Bush Discusses War on Terror**

Washington, D.C.

March 8, 2005

(<http://www.whitehouse.gov/news/releases/2005/03/20050308-3.html>)

... Our strategy to keep the peace in the longer term is to help change the conditions that give rise to extremism and terror, especially in the broader Middle East. Parts of that region have been caught for generations in a cycle of tyranny and despair and radicalism. When a dictatorship controls the political life of a country, responsible opposition cannot develop, and dissent is driven underground and toward the extreme. And to draw attention away from their social and economic failures, dictators place blame on other countries and other races, and stir the hatred that leads to violence. This status quo of despotism and anger cannot be ignored or appeased, kept in a box or bought off, because we have witnessed how the violence in that region can reach easily across borders and oceans. The entire world has an urgent interest in the progress, and hope, and freedom in the broader Middle East.

The advance of hope in the Middle East requires new thinking in the region. By now it should be clear that authoritarian rule is not the wave of the future; it is the last gasp of a discredited past. It should be clear that free nations escape stagnation, and grow stronger with time, because they encourage the creativity and enterprise of their people. It should be clear that economic progress requires political modernization, including honest representative government and the rule of law. And it should be clear that no society can advance with only half of its talent and energy -- and that demands the full participation of women.

The advance of hope in the Middle East also requires new thinking in the capitals of great democracies -- including Washington, D.C. By now it should be clear that decades of excusing and accommodating tyranny, in the pursuit of stability, have only led to injustice and instability and tragedy. It should be clear that the advance of democracy leads to peace, because governments that respect the rights of their people also respect the rights of their neighbors. It should be clear that the best antidote to radicalism and terror is the tolerance and hope kindled in free societies. And our duty is now clear: For the sake of our long-term security, all free nations must stand with the forces of democracy and justice that have begun to transform the Middle East.

Encouraging democracy in that region is a generational commitment. It's also a difficult commitment, demanding patience and resolve -- when the headlines are good and when the headlines aren't so good. Freedom has determined enemies, who show no mercy for the innocent, and no respect for the rules of warfare. Many societies in the region struggle with poverty and illiteracy, many rulers in the region have longstanding habits of control; many people in the region have deeply ingrained habits of fear.

For all these reasons, the chances of democratic progress in the broader Middle East have seemed frozen in place for decades. Yet at last, clearly and suddenly, the thaw has begun. The people of Afghanistan have embraced free government, after suffering under one of the most backward tyrannies on earth. The voters in Iraq defied threats of murder, and have set their country on a path to full democracy. The people of the Palestinian Territories cast their ballots against violence and corruption of the past. And any who doubt the appeal of freedom in the Middle East can look to Lebanon, where the Lebanese people are demanding a free and independent nation. In the words of one Lebanese observer, "Democracy is knocking at the door of this country and, if it's successful in Lebanon, it is going to ring the doors of every Arab regime."

Across the Middle East, a critical mass of events is taking that region in a hopeful new direction. Historic changes have many causes, yet these changes have one factor in common. A businessman in Beirut recently said, "We have removed the mask of fear. We're not afraid anymore." Pervasive fear is the foundation of every dictatorial regime -- the prop that holds up all power not based on consent. And when the regime of fear is broken, and the people find their courage and find their voice, democracy is their goal, and tyrants, themselves, have reason to fear. ...

- **Remarks at the London Meeting Supporting the Palestinian Authority**  
**Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice**

London, United Kingdom

March 1, 2005

(<http://www.state.gov/secretary/rm/2005/42822.htm>)

... In January, the Palestinian people held presidential elections that international observers agreed were free and fair. These elections were a credit to the Palestinian Authority and a source of honor for the Palestinian people. Israel offered its support to the Palestinians as they took this important first step toward democracy. And we hope to see similar cooperation for the Palestinian elections for parliament this July ... and for the municipal elections in Gaza and the West Bank that will continue through the end of this year.

We in the international community must encourage the Palestinians to advance democratic reforms. A more representative Palestinian Authority must continue to answer the people's call for good governance, economic opportunity, and real justice.

We applaud recent Palestinian efforts to make their government more transparent and accountable. A revised Palestinian Basic Law is serving well as an interim constitution. A new electoral law is being discussed in the Palestinian Legislative Council. And just last week, this Council approved a dynamic new cabinet of ministers who are committed to strengthening the cause of reform. ...

- **On-the-Record Briefing to Press in London**  
**Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice**

London, United Kingdom

March 1, 2005

(<http://www.state.gov/secretary/rm/2005/42852.htm>)

... The prospects for peace between Israelis and Palestinians are the best they've been in many years and this meeting reflects our determination and that of others in the international community to seize this opportunity for peace.

We are encouraged by the preliminary steps that the Palestinian leadership has taken on security toward the restoration of law and order and in establishing the basis for a ceasefire. We are also encouraged by the Israeli response to these steps. Last week's bombing in Tel Aviv reminds us, however, that a ceasefire will not bring permanent peace. The roadmap rightly calls for the dismantling of terrorist networks. Otherwise, the path to peace can be blocked by terrorists at any time.

Our efforts here have focused on ways to build momentum for this process, achieving an end to violence and terror that would permit the implementation of the roadmap and help build the institutions for a sovereign, independent, democratic and viable Palestine that can live at peace with a safe and secure Israel.



The contributions of other states in the region remain essential. Egypt and Jordan have played a critical role over the years. I was pleased to hear their commitment and that of other regional states to support the important changes underway in Palestinian society. The United States will continue to do its part. Lieutenant General Ward has made his first visit to the region as Senior U.S. Security Coordinator and he will lead an active effort to help reform and rebuild Palestinian security capabilities in conjunction with others who wish to help.

We have also moved forward with our \$41 million quick impact program and we are planning for our \$350 million assistance program to the Palestinians, targeting job creation, private sector development and infrastructure construction. We will keep doing all we can in the months and years ahead.

These are momentous times in the Middle East. In barely two months, we have seen historic elections in Palestine and Iraq, an opening toward broader participation toward municipal elections in Saudi Arabia, and very important decisions by President Mubarak to open up competition in Egyptian presidential elections, as well as, of course, the dramatic outpouring of popular desire for freedom in Lebanon.

Many challenges lie ahead, but it is deeply in all of our interests to help the people of this region shape a more promising future and that is exactly the message of this conference in support of the Palestinians. ...

- **[President Bush Congratulates Iraqis on Provisional Election Results](#)**

Washington, D.C.

February 13, 2005

(<http://www.whitehouse.gov/news/releases/2005/02/20050213.html>)

Two weeks ago, more than eight million Iraqis defied terrorists and went to the polls. The world saw long lines of Iraqi men and women voting in a free and fair election for the first time in their lives. The United States and our Coalition partners can all take pride in our role in making that great day possible.

Today, the provisional results of the election have been announced. We still await their review and certification. I congratulate the Iraqi people for defying terrorist threats and setting their country on the path of democracy and freedom. And I congratulate every candidate who stood for election and those who will take office once the results are certified.

- **[State of the Union Address](#)**

**President George W. Bush**

Washington, D.C.

February 2, 2005

(<http://www.whitehouse.gov/news/releases/2005/02/20050202-11.html>)

... In the long-term, the peace we seek will only be achieved by eliminating the conditions that feed radicalism and ideologies of murder. If whole regions of the world remain in despair and grow in hatred, they will be the recruiting grounds for terror, and that terror will stalk America and other free nations for decades. The only force powerful enough to stop the rise of tyranny and terror, and replace hatred with hope, is the force of human freedom. Our enemies know this, and that is why the terrorist Zarqawi recently declared war on what he called the "evil principle" of democracy. And we've declared our own intention: America will stand with the allies of freedom to support democratic movements in the Middle East and beyond, with the ultimate goal of ending tyranny in our world.

The United States has no right, no desire, and no intention to impose our form of government on anyone else. That is one of the main differences between us and our enemies. They seek to impose and expand an empire of oppression, in which a tiny group of brutal, self-appointed rulers control every aspect of every life. Our aim is to build and preserve a community of free and independent nations, with governments that answer to their citizens, and reflect their own cultures. And because democracies respect their own people and their neighbors, the advance of freedom will lead to peace.

That advance has great momentum in our time -- shown by women voting in Afghanistan, and Palestinians choosing a new direction, and the people of Ukraine asserting their democratic rights and electing a president. We are witnessing landmark events in the history of liberty. And in the coming years, we will add to that story.

The beginnings of reform and democracy in the Palestinian territories are now showing the power of freedom to break old patterns of violence and failure. Tomorrow morning, Secretary of State Rice departs on a trip that will take her to Israel and the West Bank for meetings with Prime Minister Sharon and President Abbas. She will discuss with them how we and our friends can help the Palestinian people end terror and build the institutions of a peaceful, independent, democratic state. To promote this democracy, I will ask Congress for \$350 million to support Palestinian political, economic, and security reforms. The goal of two democratic states, Israel and Palestine, living side by side in peace, is within reach -- and America will help them achieve that goal.

To promote peace and stability in the broader Middle East, the United States will work with our friends in the region to fight the common threat of terror, while we encourage a higher standard of freedom. Hopeful reform is already taking hold in an arc from Morocco to Jordan to Bahrain. The government of Saudi Arabia can demonstrate its leadership in the region by expanding the role of its people in determining their future. And the great and proud nation of Egypt, which showed the way toward peace in the Middle East, can now show the way toward democracy in the Middle East.

To promote peace in the broader Middle East, we must confront regimes that continue to harbor terrorists and pursue weapons of mass murder. Syria still allows its territory, and parts of Lebanon, to be used by terrorists who seek to destroy every chance of peace in the region. You have passed, and we are applying, the Syrian Accountability Act -- and we expect the Syrian government to end all support for terror and open the door to freedom.

Today, Iran remains the world's primary state sponsor of terror -- pursuing nuclear weapons while depriving its people of the freedom they seek and deserve. We are working with European allies to make clear to the Iranian regime that it must give up its uranium enrichment program and any plutonium reprocessing, and end its support for terror. And to the Iranian people, I say tonight: As you stand for your own liberty, America stands with you.

Our generational commitment to the advance of freedom, especially in the Middle East, is now being tested and honored in Iraq. That country is a vital front in the war on terror, which is why the terrorists have chosen to make a stand there. Our men and women in uniform are fighting terrorists in Iraq, so we do not have to face them here at home. And the victory of freedom in Iraq will strengthen a new ally in the war on terror, inspire democratic reformers from Damascus to Tehran, bring more hope and progress to a troubled region, and thereby lift a terrible threat from the lives of our children and grandchildren.

We will succeed because the Iraqi people value their own liberty -- as they showed the world last Sunday. Across Iraq, often at great risk, millions of citizens went to the polls and elected 275 men and women to represent them in a new Transitional National Assembly. A young woman in Baghdad told of waking to the sound of mortar fire on election day, and wondering if it might be too dangerous to vote. She said, "Hearing those explosions, it occurred to me -- the insurgents are weak, they are afraid of democracy, they are losing. So I got my husband, and I got my parents, and we all came out and voted together."

Americans recognize that spirit of liberty, because we share it. In any nation, casting your vote is an act of civic responsibility; for millions of Iraqis, it was also an act of personal courage, and they have earned the respect of us all.

One of Iraq's leading democracy and human rights advocates is Safia Taleb al-Suhail. She says of her country, "We were occupied for 35 years by Saddam Hussein. That was the real occupation. Thank you to the American people who paid the cost, but most of all, to the soldiers." Eleven years ago, Safia's father was assassinated by Saddam's intelligence service. Three days ago in Baghdad, Safia was finally able to vote for the leaders of her country -- and we are honored that she is with us tonight.

The terrorists and insurgents are violently opposed to democracy, and will continue to attack it. Yet, the terrorists' most powerful myth is being destroyed. The whole world is seeing that the car bombers and assassins are not only fighting coalition forces, they are trying to destroy the hopes of Iraqis, expressed in free elections. And the whole world now knows that a small group of extremists will not overturn the will of the Iraqi people.

We will succeed in Iraq because Iraqis are determined to fight for their own freedom, and to write their own history. As Prime Minister Allawi said in his speech to Congress last September, "Ordinary Iraqis are anxious to shoulder all the security burdens of our country as quickly as possible."

That is the natural desire of an independent nation, and it is also the stated mission of our coalition in Iraq. The new political situation in Iraq opens a new phase of our work in that country.

At the recommendation of our commanders on the ground, and in consultation with the Iraqi government, we will increasingly focus our efforts on helping prepare more capable Iraqi security forces -- forces with skilled officers and an effective command structure. As those forces become more self-reliant and take on greater security responsibilities, America and its coalition partners will increasingly be in a supporting role. In the end, Iraqis must be able to defend their own country -- and we will help that proud, new nation secure its liberty.

Recently an Iraqi interpreter said to a reporter, "Tell America not to abandon us." He and all Iraqis can be certain: While our military strategy is adapting to circumstances, our commitment remains firm and unchanging. We are standing for the freedom of our Iraqi friends, and freedom in Iraq will make America safer for generations to come. We will not set an artificial timetable for leaving Iraq, because that would embolden the terrorists and make them believe they can wait us out. We are in Iraq to achieve a result: A country that is democratic, representative of all its people, at peace with its neighbors, and able to defend itself. And when that result is achieved, our men and women serving in Iraq will return home with the honor they have earned. ...

- **President Bush's Statement on Palestinian Elections**

Washington, D.C.

January 9, 2005

(<http://www.whitehouse.gov/news/releases/2005/01/20050109.html>)

I am heartened by today's strong turnout in the Palestinian elections. Palestinians throughout the West Bank and Gaza took a key step toward building a democratic future by choosing a new president in elections that observers describe as largely free and fair. This is a historic day for the Palestinian people and for the people of the Middle East.

America and all free nations strongly support the efforts of the Palestinian people to create lasting democratic institutions. These efforts -- including today's presidential elections and the parliamentary elections that will follow in several months -- are essential for the establishment of a sovereign, independent, viable, democratic, and peaceful Palestinian state that can live alongside a safe and secure Israel. These elections are further proof that when given a choice, all peoples seek to live in liberty and to choose their own government.

The United States stands ready to help the Palestinian people realize their aspirations. The new Palestinian president and his cabinet face critical tasks ahead, including fighting terrorism, combatting corruption, building reformed and democratic institutions, and reviving the Palestinian economy.

We look forward to working with him and the Palestinian people to address these challenges and to advance the cause of Middle East peace consistent with the vision I set forth on June 24, 2002, of two states, Israel and Palestine, living side by side in peace and security. Other countries also have constructive and vital roles to play. Israel must help to improve the humanitarian and economic situation in the West Bank and Gaza, and follow through with the Disengagement Plan. The Arab states must take concrete steps with all parties to create a regional environment conducive to peace, lend financial support to the Palestinian people, and refuse to assist or harbor terrorists. The United States is looking carefully at how we can best organize and fund our own efforts to help the parties achieve a lasting peace.

## REPORTS & DOCUMENTS

- **[The Middle East Peace Talks](#)**

CRS Report, Congressional Research Service/ Library of Congress

Updated March 18, 2005

([http://www.usembassy.at/en/download/pdf/middle\\_east\\_peace.pdf](http://www.usembassy.at/en/download/pdf/middle_east_peace.pdf))

### CRS Report for Congress

Received through the CRS Web

The international war against terrorism after September 11, 2001, prompted renewed U.S. focus on a peace process. On June 24, 2002, President Bush declared, “peace requires new and different Palestinian leadership so that a Palestinian state can be born.” On April 30, 2003, the United States, the U.N., European Union, and Russia (the Quartet) presented a “Roadmap” to Palestinian statehood within three years. It has not been implemented. In December 2003, Sharon proposed to unilaterally disengage from the Palestinians in Gaza and four small settlements in the West Bank. Implementation is scheduled to begin in July 2005. Palestinian Authority (PA) Chairman/President Yasir Arafat died on November 11, 2004, and, on January 9, 2005, Mahmud Abbas was elected to succeed him. On February 8, Abbas and Sharon declared an end to violence. Both have made concrete goodwill gestures. Congress is interested in the peace talks because of its oversight role in the conduct of U.S. foreign policy, its support for Israel, and keen constituent interest. It is concerned about U.S. financial and other commitments and the Palestinians’ fulfillment of their commitments to Israel. Congress has appropriated aid for the West Bank and Gaza, with conditions intended to ensure Palestinian compliance with agreements with Israel.

Congress has repeatedly endorsed Jerusalem as the undivided capital of Israel, and many Members seek sanctions on the PLO and PA.

- **[A Performance-Based Roadmap to a Permanent Two-State Solution to the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict](#)**

Office of the Spokesman/ U.S. Department of State

Washington, D.C.

April 30, 2003

(<http://www.state.gov/r/pa/prs/ps/2003/20062.htm>)

A two-state solution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict will only be achieved through an end to violence and terrorism, when the Palestinian people have a leadership acting decisively against terror and willing and able to build a practicing democracy based on tolerance and liberty, and through Israel's readiness to do what is necessary for a democratic Palestinian state to be established, and a clear, unambiguous acceptance by both parties of the goal of a negotiated settlement as described below. The Quartet will assist and facilitate implementation of the plan, starting in Phase I, including direct discussions between the parties as required. The plan establishes a realistic timeline for implementation. However, as a performance-based plan, progress will require and depend upon the good faith efforts of the parties, and their compliance with each of the obligations outlined below. Should the parties perform their obligations rapidly, progress within and through the phases may come sooner than indicated in the plan. Non-compliance with obligations will impede progress.

A settlement, negotiated between the parties, will result in the emergence of an independent, democratic, and viable Palestinian state living side by side in peace and security with Israel and its other neighbors. The settlement will resolve the Israel-Palestinian conflict, and end the occupation that began in 1967, based on the foundations of the Madrid Conference, the principle of land for peace, UNSCRs 242, 338 and 1397, agreements previously reached by the parties, and the initiative of Saudi Crown Prince Abdullah – endorsed by the Beirut Arab League Summit – calling for acceptance of Israel as a neighbor living in peace and security, in the context of a comprehensive settlement. This initiative is a vital element of international efforts to promote a comprehensive peace on all tracks, including the Syrian-Israeli and Lebanese-Israeli tracks.

## FACT SHEETS

- **[The United States and Mideast Work Together for Democratic Reform](#)**

Office of the Spokesman/ U.S. Department of State

Washington, D.C.

March 9, 2005

(<http://www.state.gov/r/pa/prs/ps/2005/43188.htm>)

The Middle East Partnership Initiative is sending a message of strong United States' support for reform efforts in the region.

The Partnership Initiative funds over 100 programs in 14 countries to achieve the reform goals that President Bush outlined in launching the Initiative in December 2002. Designed to benefit all people of the region, especially women and youth, this Presidential initiative supports innovative, sustainable, and locally led political, economic, and educational reform efforts in the Middle East and North Africa.

- **[Joint Statement by the Quartet](#)**

Office of the Spokesman/ U.S. Department of State

London, United Kingdom

March 1, 2005

(<http://www.state.gov/r/pa/prs/ps/2005/42829.htm>)

The Quartet met in London today and strongly reaffirmed our commitment to help Israelis and Palestinians make progress toward the two-state solution which is so deeply in both their interests. The Quartet condemned in the strongest possible terms the terrorist attack that occurred in Tel Aviv on February 25, which killed and wounded dozens of innocent victims and undermines the recent positive steps taken by Israel and the Palestinians. The Quartet called for immediate action by the Palestinian Authority to apprehend and bring to justice the perpetrators. The Quartet welcomed President Abbas' condemnation of the attack and pledge to act against those responsible, noted the initial steps taken in this regard, and stressed the need for further and sustained action by the Palestinian Authority to prevent acts of terrorism. Noting the fragility of the current revived momentum in discussions the Quartet encourages the two parties to continue on the path of direct dialogue and negotiation.

The Quartet recognizes the importance of the Sharm el-Sheikh summit of February 8 at which President Abbas announced a halt to violence against all Israelis, and Prime Minister Sharon announced a halt to military activities against all Palestinians, and expresses its appreciation to Egypt and Jordan for their roles. The Quartet urges the full implementation of the mutual commitments made at the summit by both parties, and urges all countries to support their efforts. The Quartet commends the Israeli cabinet's recent approval of the initiative to withdraw from Gaza and parts of the West Bank, and reiterates that withdrawal from Gaza should be full and complete and should be undertaken in a manner consistent with the Roadmap, as an important step toward the realization of the vision of two democratic states, Israel and Palestine, living side by side in peace and security. The Quartet calls for the resumption of progress towards the implementation of both parties' obligations under the Roadmap. The Quartet reiterates its view that no party should undertake unilateral actions that could prejudice the resolution of final status issues. Quartet members agree on the need to ensure that a new Palestinian state is truly viable, including with contiguous territory in the West Bank. A state of scattered territories will not work.

The Quartet welcomes the recent vote of confidence by the PLC for a new Palestinian cabinet, as well as today's international meeting in London to support Palestinian institution building.

The Quartet urges the international community to review and energize current donor coordination structures, with a view to streamlining them in order to increase their effectiveness. The Quartet emphasizes the need for the international community to play a vital role in providing additional financial support to the Palestinians, which is essential in order to support needed reforms, and to help prepare the Palestinian Authority prepare to assume control over areas from which Israel intends to withdraw. The Quartet members encourage an early meeting of the Ad Hoc Liaison Committee to prepare for a pledging conference shortly afterwards.

The Quartet members reiterated their commitment to the positions and principles outlined in their joint statements of 4 May and 22 September 2004. The Quartet remains ready to engage actively, reaffirms its encouragement and support for both sides for the progress they have made in recent weeks, and reiterates its commitment to the fulfillment of the vision of two states, a safe and secure Israel and a sovereign, contiguous, democratic Palestine, living side by side in peace and security.

- **U.S.-EU Cooperation on the Middle East Peace Process**

Bureau of European and Eurasian Affairs/ U.S. Department of State  
Washington, D.C.

February 17, 2005

(<http://www.state.gov/p/eur/rls/fs/42551.htm>)

*The European Union and the United States are going to be very strong partners as we try and realize the opportunities before us in the Israeli-Palestinian issue.*

Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice  
Brussels, Belgium, February 9, 2005

The United States and the European Union (EU) are working closely together to secure a lasting peace between Israel and the Palestinians. The U.S. and the EU are committed to the Roadmap for Peace in the Middle East through the Quartet process (which also includes Russia and the UN), share the vision of two states living side by side, in peace and security and agree we must seize this moment of opportunity in the pursuit of peace in the Middle East.

President Bush announced in the State of the Union on February 3, 2005, that he will ask Congress for \$350 million for the Palestinians to support political, economic, and security reforms. The Department of State notified Congress of our intent to reprogram over \$40 million in previously authorized assistance for quick disbursing projects designed to make an immediate impact on the lives of the Palestinians. For its part, EU External Relations Commissioner Benita Ferrero-Waldner announced on February 8, 2005 that the EU would contribute 250 million euros (approximately \$324 million) in 2005 to help support the Palestinians. This follows the EU's 2004 contribution of approximately 250 million euros.

The United States will meet with European and other partners in London on March 1, 2005 to discuss how the international community can support Palestinian reform efforts and help the Palestinian Authority prepare to govern Gaza. (See <http://www.state.gov/r/pa/ei/rls/22520.htm> for more information on the Quartet.)



- **[U.S.-EU Cooperation on Iraq](#)**

Bureau of European and Eurasian Affairs/ U.S. Department of State  
Washington, D.C.

February 17, 2005

(<http://www.state.gov/p/eur/rls/fs/42557.htm>)

The United States and the European Union (EU) are committed to a federal, democratic, pluralistic, and unified Iraq. We cooperate closely on the full range of political, economic, development, and security issues affecting Iraq and deeply appreciate High Representative Solana's recent comment that there will be "more Europe" in Iraq in the months ahead. The European Commission has been a constructive founding member of the "core group" of donors to Iraqi reconstruction efforts, participating actively in the Madrid and Tokyo conferences and subsequent donor meetings. The Commission provided 320 million euros of reconstruction assistance in 2003-2004 and pledged 200 million euros in 2005. The Commission announced the 2005 pledge the Friday before Iraqi elections to underscore its support for the democratic transition.

The European Commission and EU Member States have worked closely with the U.S. in coordinating support for the Iraqi Interim Government with reconstruction, election assistance, and Paris Club debt relief. EU leaders expressed support for the strong voter turnout in Iraq's elections and are committed to supporting the development of democratic institutions in Iraq.

Commission funds, channeled mainly through the World Bank/UN International Reconstruction Fund Facility for Iraq (IRRFI), are earmarked for essential services, jobs, training for energy and trade officials, and support for civil society organizations in Iraq.

Some EU Member States made significant bilateral pledges to Iraq's reconstruction in addition to their bilateral humanitarian efforts and share of the European Commission package (UK - \$452 million, Italy - \$235 million, and Spain - \$220 million). EU Member States were among the Paris Club creditors who forgave 80 percent of Iraqi debt, totaling almost \$32 billion in debt relief.

Individual EU member states, led by the UK, Italy, and Poland, are making important contributions to the multinational forces in Iraq.

- **[World Leaders React to the Iraqi Elections](#)**

Bureau of Public Affairs/ U.S. Department of State  
Washington, D.C.

February 8, 2005

(<http://www.state.gov/r/pa/scp/2005/42031.htm>)

The Iraqi Elections

- Iraqis in large numbers voted at 5,216 polling centers around Iraq on January 30.

- Iraqi officials organized the election and Iraqi security forces protected the polling places. Over 30,000 trained Iraqis monitored the elections.
- More than 265,000 Iraqis participated in the Out-of-Country Voting program, held in 14 countries worldwide. 94% of those who registered reportedly voted.
- A 275-member Transitional Assembly will be seated within the next few weeks.

Leaders around the globe responded quickly and favorably to the January 30 Iraqi elections, praising the courage and determination of the Iraqi people in going to the polls. They also recognized that the election, while a milestone, is a first step on a longer road to democracy.

Some of their statements follow.

- Mexican President Vicente Fox: The Iraqi election “is an important democratic step and we hope that the process won’t be impeded by violence.”
- El Salvadoran President Elias Antonio Saca: “I believe that very few in the world expected such a marvelous response on the part of the Iraqi people – that such a high percentage went out to vote.... We’ve been through the most difficult part, today comes the most important part, which is to allow the established authorities to be at the forefront of control in their country.”
- British Prime Minister Tony Blair: “It was moving and humbling... to see the simple determination and clear-sighted courage of millions of Iraqis exercising the right to vote for the first time in their lives. A democratic Iraq is not just a giant step forward for Iraq itself; it is a blow right at the heart of global terrorism....”
- German Foreign Minister Joschka Fischer: Iraqis “deserve great recognition for the will they have shown to shape the future of their country peacefully and democratically, despite massive intimidation.”
- Polish Defense Minister Jerzy Szmajdzinski: “These elections show we are dealing with an optimistic scenario.... For sure the high election turnout shows the Iraqis, in contrast to the black scenarios and various predictions, have made this their day, their celebration.”
- Russian President Vladimir Putin: “The conditions for the election in Iraq were, to put it mildly, very difficult. At the same time it is a step in the right direction; it is a positive event.”
- Jordan’s King Abdullah II: “If we have good examples of democratic process, whether it’s in Iraq or with the Palestinians, it does help countries such as Jordan to be able to push the envelope. So I think what we saw yesterday in Iraq is a positive thing. I think it is a thing that will set a good tone for the Middle East, and I’m very optimistic.”
- Afghan President Hamid Karzai: “I am happy for the people of Iraq and hope that today’s elections will be another important step on the path of achieving stability, democracy and prosperity for our Iraqi brothers and sisters.”
- UN Secretary General Kofi Annan: “The Iraqis who turned out today are courageous; they know that they are voting for the future of their country. We must encourage them and support them to take control of their destiny.”

- European Union Foreign Policy Chief Javier Solana: “Despite the many difficulties that lie ahead, the elections mark progress towards a transition to a democratic, free and peaceful Iraq.”
- Vatican Secretary of State Cardinal Angelo Sodano: “The international community hopes this day may magnify a future of peace.”

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- **U.S. Assistance to the Palestinians**

Office of the Spokesman/ U.S. Department of State

Jerusalem

February 7, 2005

(<http://www.state.gov/r/pa/prs/ps/2005/41870.htm>)

- The President announced in the State of the Union on February 3 that he will ask Congress for \$350 million for the Palestinians to support political, economic and security reforms. We will be consulting with Congress about modalities for disbursing this assistance.
- Separately from the \$350 million mentioned by the President, we notified Congress of our intent to reprogram over \$40 million in previously authorized assistance for quick disbursing projects designed to make an immediate, visible impact on the lives of Palestinians.
- As the President has said, the goal of two states living side by side in peace and security is within reach; we are at a moment of opportunity and we must seize it.
- We are committed to building democratic Palestinian institutions dedicated to reform and to helping the Palestinian people, particularly as they prepare for Israeli disengagement from Gaza and parts of the West Bank.
- This package of aid is designed to make an impact, both immediately and in the long-term, on the lives of Palestinians, and to support the Palestinian Authority as it continues its reform efforts.

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Please visit the homepage of the U.S. Embassy Vienna, Austria at: <http://www.usembassy.at>



The program page on **“Challenges to U.S. Policy in the Middle East”** and **“Iraq and the Middle East Peace Process”** will be available at:

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